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INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
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RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 1169
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1352
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 4192
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0792
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 1754
RUEHJA/AMCONSUL SURABAYA PRIORITY 1934
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 002580

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SUBJECT: BUSINESSMEN TRAVELING WITH ACEH GOVERNOR ARRESTED

REF: JAKARTA 2365

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

11. (C) Summary. The deal was too good to be true. Two businessmen traveling with Aceh Governor Irwandi Yusuf's delegation to the U.S. were arrested September 11 in New York City after printing a \$32 million check from a scam internet site and trying to cash it at Citibank in Manhattan. The two spent a night in jail before appearing in front of a judge, who released them pending a decision on whether drop the case. Governor Irwandi is distancing himself from the two gullible compatriots. End Summary.

12. (C) Two Acehnese businessmen, Alfatwa and Lukman (we do not have full names or exact spellings), who joined Aceh Governor Irwandi Yusuf's delegation visiting the U.S. September 9-26 (ref), were arrested by NYC police when Alfatwa, accompanied by Lukman, attempted to cash a \$32 million check he had printed off the computer from an internet scam, according to Leroy Hollenbeck, an American traveling with the governor as the USAID-funded Aceh Governor Advisor. The teller alerted bank security who called police, suspecting a larger conspiracy. Hollenbeck told poloff that he talked to the arresting officer and alerted Indonesian ConGen Trie Edi Mulyani, who attended the hearing the next day. After spending a night in jail, the two were released. They are staying in their hotel room awaiting the judge's decision on whether dismiss the case, expected on September 14, Hollenbeck said, adding he expects the case to be dropped.

13. (C) The two businessmen are listed as part of the official delegation but the governor is trying to distance himself. "If he (Alfatwa) is a businessman from Aceh, he came with his own group," Irwandi is quoted in September 14 Kompas. Suriah (approximate spelling), an Acehnese woman living in NYC who organized that leg of the visit, told Consulate Medan that the governor has asked the two to stay in their hotel in order to avoid publicity. The governor is not upset over the incident, but was only concerned that the two not represent themselves as part of his delegation, which they did not, Hollenbeck told us. Hollenbeck said the two were just tagging along.

¶4. (C) The arrest received publicity in Jakarta newspapers September 14, reporting correctly that the two are part of the governor's delegation, despite Irwandi's denial. ConGen Mulyani confirmed to the media that the two had been arrested and appeared in court on "suspicion by the bank that (Alfatwa) tried to cash money for a spectacular sum."

¶5. (C) Assuming the two will not be prosecuted, the only repercussion might be a political one for Governor Irwandi who is already under pressure for taking too many trips overseas and not spending enough time tending business at home. This incident could fuel more criticism of his trips as junkets.

¶6. (C) Poloff contacted an official with the Foreign Ministry's Directorate for Protection of Indonesian Citizens, who had little information on the case but was pleased to learn that the two had been released from jail.

HUME